

# Request for Proposals

## Program Administrator Golden LEAF Scholarship Program



**Submissions due October 19, 2009**

**Contact:**  
**Ted Lord**  
**Vice President of Programs/ Staff Attorney**  
**Golden LEAF Foundation**  
**[tlord@goldenleaf.org](mailto:tlord@goldenleaf.org)**  
**888-684-8404**

## **General Background and Introduction**

In 1999, the North Carolina legislature created the Golden LEAF Foundation to administer one-half of North Carolina's share of the Master Settlement Agreement with cigarette manufacturers in accordance with the court consent decree between North Carolina and the manufacturers. A nonprofit organization devoted to the economic well-being of North Carolinians, Golden LEAF endeavors to strengthen the state's economy through diverse grantsmaking.

In keeping with its mission, the Golden LEAF Foundation has awarded over \$12 million in scholarships to almost 2,000 children from rural, economically distressed, and tobacco dependent areas of North Carolina to attend North Carolina's public universities and member institutions of the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities over the past 8 years. Golden LEAF has completed an evaluation of its scholarship program, and, as a result, is revising the program's structure. Copies of the evaluation are available on request.

## **Project Description**

Golden LEAF is seeking an organization to serve as a program administrator for the Foundation's scholarship program. The program administrator will be responsible for all activities of the program, including publicizing the program, selecting scholarship recipients, and managing distribution of funds to the schools attended by scholarship recipients. Currently, the Golden LEAF Scholarship program awards approximately 215 scholarships per year. The goals of the revised program include awarding scholarships before students make their decision whether or not to attend college so the scholarship can play a role in that decision and providing scholarships to students that have the potential to return to their home communities and provide leadership in the future.

## **Services to be Provided**

The scholarship program administrator will provide the following services:

- Design a scholarship program which would annually award approximately 215, \$12,000, 4-year scholarships to North Carolina students who attend a 4-year accredited public or nonprofit North Carolina university or college.
- Develop scholarship selection criteria in coordination with Golden LEAF Board and staff. It is expected that the primary selection criterion will be financial need as determined by federal financial aid guidelines. Another criterion will be diversity of the scholars, broadly defined, including geographic diversity.
- Design, maintain and update a scholarship program website for submission of online scholarship applications and general information about the scholarship.
- Design, develop and implement a marketing plan which includes the introduction of the re-designed Golden LEAF Scholarship Program to NC parents, students and education professionals, and help colleges and universities market the program to students.

- Develop the scholarship application, application instructions and procedures, submission procedures and the selection process.
- Operate all administrative aspects of the scholarship program, including: solicitation, collection and review of scholarship applications; selection of scholarship recipients according to established criteria as early in the school year as possible; notification of recipients and their high schools of the awards as quickly as possible; and coordination of release of funds to the universities and colleges attended by the scholars.
- Collect and maintain statistical data regarding scholarship recipients that will allow ongoing evaluation of the program and help the Foundation develop criteria that will identify students from tobacco dependent, economically distressed, and/or rural North Carolina communities that appear most likely to return to and provide leadership in their home communities, though the Foundation recognizes that there are many challenges to achieving this goal.
- Conduct periodic reviews of the program. Provide updates, feedback and recommendations to the Golden LEAF staff and board.
- Develop a system to verify county residency and other eligibility criteria.
- Though not a part of the services to be provided in response to this RFP, the capacity to develop and manage in-school activities such as conferences and internships for Golden LEAF scholars and to establish a Golden LEAF scholars alumni network would be valued.

## **Schedule**

It is anticipated that the program administrator will be selected by the Foundation Board the first week of November 2009. It is the Foundation's goal that the program be implemented as quickly as possible and hopefully during the first quarter of 2010.

## **Selection Criteria**

Selection criteria may include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Demonstrated understanding of the Foundation's mission and goals
- The qualifications and experience of the program administrator in designing and administering a scholarship program
- Familiarity with the public and private college system in North Carolina
- Familiarity with the procedures and use of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) within the scholarship awarding process
- The marketing and public communication skills necessary to implement and maintain a scholarship program
- The capacity to effectively handle the day-to-day program operation
- The proposed cost to provide the services requested
- The qualifications and experience of the personnel to be assigned by the program administrator to carry out the program
- Capacity to develop scholar selection criteria that will further the Foundation's goals

## **Proposal Content**

Proposals shall include the following:

- A cover letter signed by the designated individual who is empowered to commit the organization to enter a contractual agreement with the Golden LEAF Foundation.
- The cover letter should also identify the person who will be responsible for the regular communication with Golden LEAF staff. Please include educational background, relevant training, and experience of the person who will ensure the overall development, coordination, and administration of the program
- A brief history of the organization including the organization's size and office location
- Description of the range of services provided, relevant work experience, capabilities and expertise which qualify the organization for this project
- A proposed timeline for design and implementation of the program
- Three references that the Golden LEAF staff may contact to discuss your organization's relevant experience
- A scope of services that provides an overview of the organization's anticipated approach and methodology to administer the program
- A proposed budget. Budgets should distinguish one-time costs associated with establishing the program from ongoing administrative costs.

## **Selection Procedures**

A signed copy of the proposal must be submitted to:

**Ted Lord**  
**Vice President of Programs/ Staff Attorney**  
**Golden LEAF Foundation**  
**301 North Winstead Avenue**  
**Rocky Mount NC 27804**

-or-

[tlord@goldenleaf.org](mailto:tlord@goldenleaf.org)

Proposals may be submitted by hand delivery, e-mail or mail. Faxed proposals will not be accepted. E-mailed and hand-delivered proposals must be received no later than 5:00 p.m., October 19, 2009 and mailed proposals must be postmarked by October 19, 2009 to be eligible for consideration. Failure to follow these procedures may result in disqualification of the organization from the RFP process. Any questions regarding the RFP should be directed to Ted Lord at 888-684-8404 or [tlord@goldenleaf.org](mailto:tlord@goldenleaf.org).